North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Clement V. Tillion, Chairman
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CERTIFIED:

A. W. "Bud" Boddy

A. W. "Bud" Boddy
Vice Chairman

June 4 - 1979
Date

ADVISORY PANEL MEETING
May 23, 1979

The Advisory Panel to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met commencing at 9 a.m., May 23, 1979 in the Kenai-Aleutian Room, Anchorage Westward Hilton Hotel. Vice chairman A. W. "Bud" Boddy chaired the session.

Members present included:

A. W. "Bud" Boddy, Vice chairman
Jesse Foster
Rick Lauber
Don Rawlinson
Jeffrey Stephan
Truman Emberg
Harry Wilde, Sr.
Dan O'Hara
Ed Linkous
Sig Jaeger
Chuck Jensen
Ray Lewis
Shari Gross
Jack Phillips
Oral Burch
Bob Alverson
Joseph Kurtz
Robin Chlupach
Ken Olsen

Members absent from the meeting were:

Keith Specking, Chairman
Carlene Welfelt
Nick Szabo
Bob Blake
Alan Otness

Member Chuck Jensen was selected as chairman for the herring subgroup working committee. The committee consists of Jensen, Joe Demantle, Harry Wilde, Jesse Foster, Alan Otness and Don Rawlinson.

Members Rick Lauber and Jeffrey Stephan were selected Advisory Panel representatives to the Finance Committee of the NPFMC.

Motions passed by the Advisory Panel during the meeting May 23 included the following:

Motion #1 - The Advisory Panel will defer the decision concerning the release of reserve amounts for groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska until the June meeting.

Motion #2 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that the fishery management unit in the Gulf of Alaska be re-defined to exclude those areas where the State of Alaska has traditionally managed marine resources. Re-defining the fishery management unit is construed as an interim measure pending the resolution of the definition of the Territorial Sea boundary.

Motion #3 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that price not be a factor in the consideration of granting a processor preference.

Motion #4 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that Option 3a be chosen as the preference for options concerning time/area closures in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Fishery Management Unit.

Motion #5 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that it consider the problem of salmon interceptions on the high seas.

Motion #6 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that it review the process by which commercial fisheries interim-use permits and vessel licenses are issued.

Motion #7 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that if the Council, at the May meeting, acts to impose a system of limited entry for hand trollers, that such action not be taken until the Advisory Panel is convened for the purpose of advising the Council before it acts.

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Motion #8 - The Advisory Panel recommends that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council endorse the stationing of a U.S. Coast Guard long-range search and rescue helicopter in Cold Bay on a year-round basis.

Motion #9 - The Advisory Panel recommends to the Council that an amendment be made to the Gulf of Alaska groundfish FMP to include rattails as an additional species.

By unanimous consent the Advisory Panel forwards an expression of tribute to Prof. Donald L. McKernan, deceased, for his contributions to the Council and the advancement of fisheries science and management.

AGENDA ITEMS CONSIDERED

The Advisory Panel considered ten regular agenda items and took the following action:

1. Review of the SSC agenda - An overview of the SSC agenda was made for the information of AP members. It was suggested that a method be worked out to enable the AP and SSC to meet jointly on certain Council agenda items which are deemed controversial or inordinately complicated.

2. Proposed rattail amendment - A full discussion was held on the proposed amendment to the GOA groundfish FMP that would make a line item (additional) species of rattails, with an assigned OY for the purpose of taking the rattail catch out of the total assigned to "Other Species." The rattail catch, if counted in the "Other Species" category, would threaten the assigned quota and result in halting fishing as a consequence of reaching the quota in any species.

Rattails are an "unutilized species" discarded at sea, and data indicate the rattail catch is two-thirds of the annual Japanese sablefish catch. The Advisory Panel feels that there is merit in having the Council investigate the value of rattails as a commercial species which can be utilized for fishmeal, oil, petfood, etc. American fishermen indicate a catch rate of rattails which is estimated to be one-third of the sablefish catch. The difference in percentage of catch between U.S. and Japanese fishermen is attributed to the fact that the rattail catch is more generally associated with the longline effort by the foreigners in deeper waters. (See Motion #9.)

3. July 2 reserve release - The Advisory Panel considered that the joint venture allocations are taken from the reserved amounts. Release of all reserve amounts would result in shutting down the joint venture activity. (See motion #1.)

[illegible]

4. GOA groundfish FMP regulations conflict - The Advisory Panel considered the problem posed by federal fishing regulations and their application to international waters which are so defined by the government but which have traditionally and historically been administered by the State of Alaska as state waters. In the Gulf of Alaska, these waters are generally east of 137° W longitude (Alexander Archipelago) but include Shelikof Straits and other well-known and utilized fishing areas. It is recognized by the Panel that this issue is a long-standing one and that the solution is complex, but that the overriding consideration of the Council is and properly should be the conservation of the resource. The State of Alaska intends to enforce its laws in waters construed by it to be state waters even though such waters technically lie in the FCZ. A case-in-point was made that the use of sunken gill nets could be employed in federal waters in Icy Straits where such use is prohibited by the State of Alaska and where the waters in question are considered by the State to be theirs. Where federal fishing regulations do not specifically apply in federal waters, the regulation is accomplished by the state. This results in a "gray area" where waters are technically FCZ waters but regulation is by the state. (See motion #2.)

5. Tanner crab - Dr. Jerry Reeves presented a review of the Tanner crab situation in the Bering Sea and informed the panel that previous information which had indicated several problems was not current. He said the level of crab abundance is roughly equal to previous levels (1978) and that the CPUE for the mothership fishery is about the same. The *C. bairdi* fishery will be closed on May 24.

6. Bering Sea/Aleutian FMP - An extended discussion was held concerning the time/area closures in the Bering Sea. Information on the subject was received from Bert Larkins and the position of the Hokutan Trawlers Association was explained by Steve Johnson. The Japanese were encouraged to find an agreement in common between the longliners and trawlers, and to present that agreement to the Panel for consideration. (See motion #4.)

7. DAH/processor preference - The DAH subgroup, consisting of Lauber, Gross, Jaeger, and Jensen met a 1 p.m. to discuss the processor preference subject. Their report to the Panel resulted in a motion concerning the subject of price. Chairman Lauber indicated his group were at odds with the views of the group which had met in Seattle (special DAH working group which met in Seattle on May 7). The chief concern as expressed by Lauber is that of the government getting pricing information previous to and as a condition of granting a processor preference. (See motion #3.)

8. West Coast Salmon Report - No action pending the report to the Council by Pacific Council representatives. A report was made available concerning the status of West Coast salmon stocks and the likely impact on Alaska's fisheries as a consequence of action taken down south. (See motion #7.)

[illegible]

9. FCMA oversight hearings - No action. It was brought up as a topic of conversation that the pending FCMA oversight hearings to be held in July might be an opportunity to re-open the question of contended waters. (See motion #2.)

10. FMP workshop report - The Panel received information on the proposed new filing system for information storage and retrieval, and was given a brief report on the visit to Anchorage by a NOAA group which conducted a review of the FMP review process for Council staff.

Other topics of consideration included comments by David Nanalook, mayor of Togiak, on the protection of marine mammals. Member Jesse Foster brought up again the subject of salmon interceptions by Japanese and member Truman Emberg stated that the Panel should resent the fact that, "We know how many rattails the Japanese catch but we can't find out how many salmon they catch." Bert Larkins indicated that the incidental salmon catch would be available from the INPFC.

Ted Evans, representing Marine Resources, Inc., informed the Panel that permits have been approved only recently for two ships engaged in the joint venture and fishing will commence soon for a catch of 6,000 mt. He said they are limited to an incidental catch of sablefish of 1.5 percent of the total catch.

Member Bob Alverson requested specifics of the fine or other penalties assessed KORMEX II and was informed by Ron Naab, NMFS, that Kim White would be making a report to the Council on the subject.

Further to motion #6, it was debated whether or not the Council should interfere in the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission's business to the extent of reviewing the process by which commercial fisheries interim-use permits and vessel licenses are issued. It was decided that this subject concerned fishermen in the FCZ and was a proper subject of investigation by the Council. The chief problem is the delay in getting permits out of Juneau.

On motion #8, the following resolution was submitted:

"The Advisory Panel recommends that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council endorse the stationing of a U.S. Coast Guard long-range Search-and-Rescue helicopter at the Cold Bay airfield on a 12 months-a-year basis.

Such an aircraft stationed adjacent to the most active fishery in the Bering Sea area (both by domestic and foreign fishing vessels) could satisfy the multi-purpose and high priority needs for fisheries surveillance and enforcement, and the fishing industry high priority need for a quick-response Search-and-Rescue activity and fast removal of critically injured crew men to hospital.

Accidents at sea are sharply increased in severity by even a few hours delay in removal to hospital, and can by such delay be increasingly

[illegible]

critical or fatal.

Cold Bay has a 12,000 foot runway with low terrain approaches for all-weather evacuation to major city hospitals or to the Dutch Harbor Clinic recently established with a doctor in residence.

Saving a life at sea and fisheries surveillance can be here combined with an efficient cost-effectiveness in an area of sharply increasing at-sea activity. Such activity is now constant through the year; fishing for crab, halibut, salmon, and bottomfish, and support vessels such as towboats with barges and other freighting vessels transiting the area, keeping the area at a new high in at-sea crew population.

We hope the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will endorse this industry recommendation."

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.